

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously Presented) A suture trimmer, the suture trimmer comprising:
a shaft having a proximal end and a distal end and an axis therebetween, the shaft having a groove formed in the side thereof, the groove in communication with an opening formed in the side of the shaft, the opening disposed proximal the distal end;
a cutting member slidably disposed within the shaft; and
a suture retainer slidably disposed within the shaft.
2. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to Claim 1, wherein suture trimmer further includes a handle, the handle disposed adjacent the proximal end of the shaft.
3. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to Claim 2, wherein the handle further includes a first lever and a second lever, the first lever operatively coupled to the suture retainer and the second lever operatively coupled to the cutting member.
4. (Amended) The suture trimmer according to Claim 3, wherein the [main] handle further includes at least one biasing member, the biasing member connected to at least one of the cutting member and suture retainer.
5. (Amended) The suture trimmer according to Claim 4, wherein the opening has a proximal edge, and wherein the cutting member includes a sharpened edge, [portion,] the sharpened ~~portion~~ ^{edge} adapted to engage the proximal edge [fitting] to sever ^{the} suture when suture is disposed through the groove and opening.
6. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to Claim 5, wherein the sharpened edge of the cutting member is retracted within the shaft until withdrawn by applying a force to the second lever.

7. (Amended) The suture trimmer according to Claim 6, wherein [the] suture is disposed within the groove and opening by retracting the suture retainer [guide] within the shaft by applying a force to the first lever.

8. (Previously Presented) A method for trimming suture, the method comprising:

disposing a suture loop within tissue of a patient, the suture loop including at least one knot and at least one free end of suture;

a disposing the free end of suture through a groove and an opening formed in a distal end of a suture trimmer; and

actuating a cutting member within the suture trimmer, the cutting member configured to sever the suture disposed in the opening.

9. (Amended) The method according to Claim 8, further including positioning the knot with a [the] distal tip of the suture trimmer.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 8, wherein disposing the free end of the suture through a groove and opening comprises retracting a suture retainer within the suture trimmer.

11. (Amended) The method according to Claim 10, wherein actuating [activating] a cutting member comprises applying a force to a lever in communication with the cutting member, the cutting member being retracted from a shielded position within a shaft of the suture trimmer to an exposed position, the exposed position configured to trim the suture.

12. (Amended) A suture trimmer, the suture trimmer comprising:
a shaft having a proximal end and a distal end defining an axis therebetween, the shaft including a groove formed in the side thereof, the groove in communication with an opening formed in the side of the shaft, the opening disposed proximal the distal end;
a cutting edge [member] formed on a proximal end [within an edge] of the opening;
and
a suture retainer having a proximal end and a distal end, the suture retainer disposed within a bore of the shaft.

13. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to Claim 12, wherein the suture trimmer further includes a handle, the handle connected to the proximal end of the suture retainer.

14. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to Claim 13, wherein the suture trimmer further includes at least one biasing member disposed within a chamber of the handle, the biasing member operatively connected to the shaft.

15. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to Claim 14, wherein the suture trimmer further includes at least one lever, the lever operatively connected to the shaft.

16. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to Claim 15, wherein the shaft may be moved relative to the suture retainer wherein the cutting edge of the shaft is configured to sever suture when suture is disposed through the groove and opening.

17. (Previously Presented) The suture retainer according to Claim 12, wherein the suture retainer includes a handle, the handle including at least one lever, the lever operatively connected to the suture retainer.

18. (Previously Presented) The suture retainer according to Claim 17, wherein the handle is rotatable relative to the axis of the shaft and configured to rotate the suture retainer relative to the shaft assembly.

19. (Previously Presented) The suture retainer according to Claim 18, wherein the suture retainer includes a second lever, the second lever operatively coupled to the suture retainer, the second lever and suture retainer further configured to move along the axis of the shaft when a force is applied thereto.

20. (Previously Presented) The suture retainer according to Claim 19, wherein the suture retainer further includes at least one biasing member disposed within a chamber of the handle, the biasing member operatively connected to the suture retainer.

